



THE

KNIGHT



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THE GRAŠIS COINAGE OF THE GRAND DUCHY OF LITHUANIA

By Dr. Alan Stahl, Associate
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[The following is the text of a slide presentation given to the Lithuanian Numismatic Association at the New York International Coin Show on December 11, 1983.]

The numismatic history of northern Europe begins with the reformed penny of Charlemagne, introduced around the year 800. This silver coin, of about the same diameter as the U.S. quarter, though considerably lighter, was minted throughout the Carolingian Empire, which included most of Western Europe. This coin [slide], whose simple linear types and low relief set the pattern for centuries, identifies Charles, King of the French on one side, that is Charlemagne, and the mint city of Agen in SW France on the other.

In the period following the breakup of the Carolingian Empire in the 10th century, various rulers took to minting pennies, following the basic types of Charlemagne. In addition to those counts and dukes who took over the coinage within the empire, rulers of newly-formed states on the edge of the empire issued pennies in their own names for the first time. Here is a penny [slide] of Bohemia, of Duke Udalrich from the early 11th century. It identifies the ruler on one side and the hand raised in benediction is the symbol of the patron Saint Wenceslaus, whose name is in the reverse legend. Similar coins were issued in other areas directly bordering on the Carolingian empire in this period, for example in Poland and Hungary.

For some areas further removed from the Carolingian region, coinage came not directly in the form of the penny, but in the form of its derivative, the groschen. The chief reason for this is that by the high Middle Ages, the penny had been greatly debased from the standards of the 9th century and had declined in value. This penny of Louis IX of France [slide], St. Louis, of about 1250 is typical. Although similar in appearance and size to the penny of Charlemagne of more than three centuries earlier, it had barely one-quarter as much silver as the older penny.

The gros of Saint Louis was very popular in central Europe, where it was called by the German word groschen. This is one of the most popular coins of the 14th century, the groschen of Wenceslaus II of Bohemia, minted first around the year 1300. This coin was so widely distributed and imitated in eastern Europe that it became the basis of the monetary systems of countries which were establishing coinage systems at that time. In Lithuania, the first issue of pennies [denars] were made in the later 14th century, their value tied to the groschen of Wenceslaus, or Pragergroschen as it was called. These pennies of Lithuania were apparently issued in small numbers, but the groschen remained as the basis for the Lithuanian monetary system, the grašis [EDITOR'S NOTE: I will use the nominative tense in this article instead of grašiai, grašių etc...]

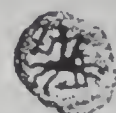


ABOVE: (Left to right) Vincent Alones, Dr. Alan Stahl, and Robert J. Douchis at the LNA meeting last December 11 in New York.



ABOVE: The Prague groschen (grašis) of Wenceslaus II of Bohemia.

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K-2 Denar of Kęstutis

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2. Throughout central and Eastern Europe the groschen remained at the base of the coinage system until the introduction of the thaler in the late 15th century. This groschen of [slide] Brandenburg of 1496 illustrates how long the denomination maintained its popularity.

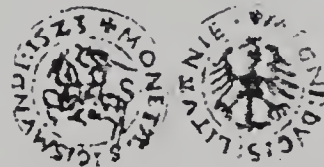
Early in the 14th century, Poland experimented with the issue of a groschen, but the coin never established itself. It is with the ascendance of the Lithuanian line to the throne of Poland that the groschen denomination became established in the region. In 1384 Jogaila, Grand Duke of Lithuania, married the heiress to the Polish throne, and took the title of King of Poland in addition to his Lithuanian title. As part of the marriage agreement, Jogaila was baptized and all of Lithuania became Christian. In recognition of this act as leader of his people to Christianity, Jogaila adopted as the symbol of his dynasty the patriarchal cross with double transverse. Under his Christian name of Wladislaw II Jagello, he issued coins in Poland, including this half groschen [slide]. The types and legends are purely Polish. The legend identifies this as MONETA WLADISL POLONIE REGIS, while one side bears a Polish eagle and the other a royal crown. The SA under the crown is the initials of the mint master of Cracow.

It wasn't until the reign of Jagello's grandson Alexander that Lithuania got its own mint and issued coins with its own types. In 1492, while his brother ruled as King John Albert of Poland, Alexander was elected Grand Duke of Lithuania. He established a mint at Vilnius and issued pennies [denare] and half-grašis, with Lithuanian types. The obverse of this half-grašis bears the legend MONETA ALEXANDRI (Coin of Alexander), while the reverse identifies him as MAGNI DUCIS LITUANIE (Grand Duke of Lithuania). The obverse bears the image of the knight on horseback with drawn sword, known as the Vytis, which had appeared on Lithuanian pennare of the 14th century as symbol of the Grand Duke of Lithuania. Though it often can't be seen on these small coins, the Vytis usually carries a shield with the double cross of the Jogaila family. The reverse bears the eagle of Poland, which may indicate that the coin was minted after Alexander became King of Poland on his brother's death in 1501, or may simply identify him as a member of that royal family.

This is a half groz [slide] of Poland after Alexander's election to that throne. It differs from Alexander's Lithuanian half-grašis in several respects. Most apparent is the pre-

sence of the royal crown rather than the Vytis as obverse type. The legend identifies him as ALEXANDER DEI G REX and this as MONETA REGIS POLONIE. One of the major differences between this coin and its Lithuanian counterpart is that is on a lower standard. It took 5 Polish half-grosz to equal 4 Lithuanian half-grašis coins of the same denomination. This difference in standard continued through most of the century and kept Lithuanian and Polish currencies separate, regardless of whether they were ruled by the same individual.

After Alexander's death in 1506, his brother Sigismund, known as Sigismund I the Old, was elected to both of his titles, King of Poland and Grand Duke of Lithuania.



Sigismund reopened the Vilnius mint in 1508 and issued a series of half-grašis there until 1529. This coin (pictured above) of his is similar to that of the preceding reign. The major difference is the addition of the date of 1509 to the obverse legend.

This half-grašis of 1529 [slide] is the last year of minting of this denomination in this reign, though Sigismund continued on the throne for another two decades. Its chief difference from the previous coin is the change from the Gothic style of lettering to the much more readable Renaissance letters.

In 1535, six years after his last half-grašis, Sigismund minted this grašis at the Vilnius mint, the first full grašis denomination coin of Lithuania. With the larger field offered by this half-dollar sized coin, he was able to give more complete renderings of both the types and legends. The obverse of this coin bears all three symbols associated with the Lithuanian coinage of the period, the splendid charging Vytis on horseback, the doubled cross clearly visible on his shield and, in a shield below the symbolic representation of the Columns of Gediminas, legendary founder of the dynasty. The obverse legend identifies this as MONETA MAGNI DVCATVS LIT (Coin of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania), while the reverse gives his titles as Sigismund the First, King of Poland, Grand Duke of Lithuania.



Sigismund issued this large coin only one more year, in 1536. The chief difference between this and the previous coin is the fact that the Columns of Gediminas are made larger and removed from their shield at the bottom of the obverse.

In 1529, when Sigismund the Old was 62, his son, who took the name of Sigismund II Augustus, was elected Grand Duke of Lithuania and a year

LUDWIG LITHUANIAN CAMP MONEY

At the end of World War II, roughly 70,000 Lithuanians had made their way to the western zones of Austria and Germany, out of Stalin's reach. These Displaced Persons (DPs) were placed in camps run by the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) and later by the International Refugee Organization (IRO). Many camps had their own internal monetary systems which were used to pay workers and others within their confines.

The Lithuanian encampment at Ludwig was part of the Dillingen UNRRA District, Team 308. Money used at this camp consisted of two issues: the first issue was printed on white paper; the second on light violet. The whites were paid to men, and the violet to women! Money was issued in 1, 2, 5 unites (85 x 55 mm) and 10 and 50 unites (112 x 68 mm.).

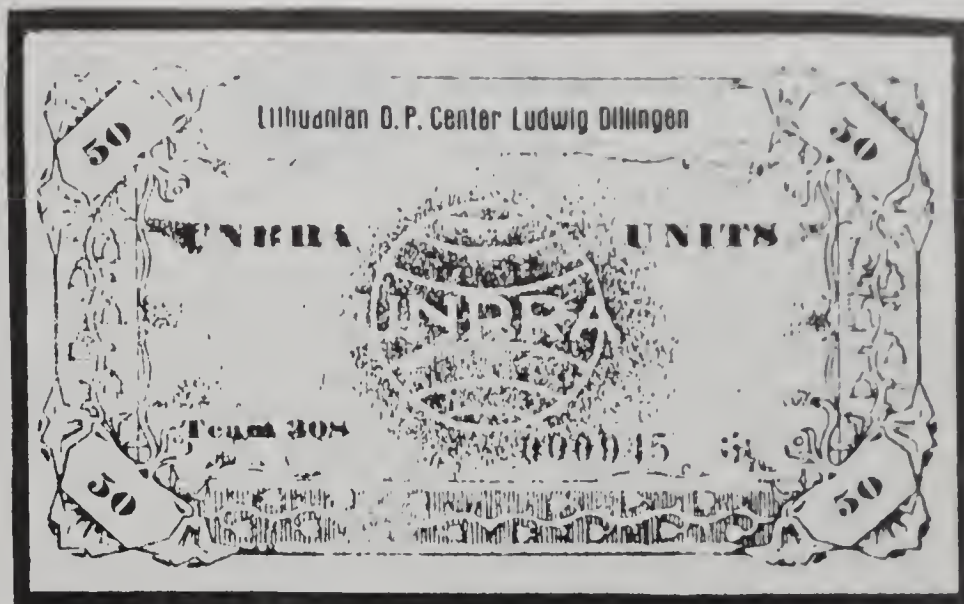
The Ludwig scrip was designed by Lithuanian artist Antanas Rūkštelė (1906-) well known as a painter and ethnographer.

Rūkštelė had served as curator of the Čiurlionis Art Gallery in Kaunas. As a painter, he was responsible for many landscapes, portraits, and book illustrations. He lived in the DP camps from 1944 to 1949. He came to the U.S. in 1955. Apparently, UNRRA officials

were so pleased with Rūkštelė's art, that they used his same basic design to print the Polish DP camp money for the Luitpold camp.

UNRRA records confirm the use of the Ludwig money. A report dated May 16, 1946 states, "The Welfare Department has prepared a new currency system based on rationing amenities supplies. Every resident is given a prescribed number of points..." Another letter dated July 16, 1946 states, "The camp PX, working on a 'point' system, is gradually becoming firmly established... The DPs are almost enthusiastic regarding this type of payment, and it has certainly increased the desire to work."

The artwork on the Ludwig notes consists of a Lithuanian tulip motif. This and the UNRRA emblem on all notes are printed in green. The text and unit numerals are overprinted in red. This allowed for its "generic" use, using the same design.



Each note reads, "Lithuanian D.P. Center Ludwig Dillingen 50 UNRRA UNITS, Team 308." A red serial number is printed at center bottom, slightly to the right. The initials of the artist "AR" appear on the bottom border left side, just to the right point of the downwards pointing tulip.

On the reverse in Lithuanian is printed, "Stovyklinių Markių klastojimas ir padirbimas baudžiamas," meaning, "The falsification and counterfitting of Camp Marks is a punishable offense." Although the denominations are in units, this penalty clause reveals that the money was tied into the Mark (Germany) monetary system.

As time progresses, perhaps camp money of other Lithuanian camps will surface. We encourage our readers to report to us other examples of this special type of Lithuanian money. Special thanks to Juozas Kreivėnas for supplying us with copies of the Ludwig money.

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COMING

Next issue we will be announcing a heretofore unknown Lithuanian banknote which was printed by the Bank of Lithuania in 1924, but not released into circulation!...

Also an article by Henry L. Gaidis on the 1938 Lithuanian Olympics Medal.

We encourage our readers to send us new items and articles, news, information, etc! This is what has kept the LNA going! Feel free to write us letters: we'd like to hear from you!

4. THE GRAŠIS COINAGE OF THE GRAND DUCHY

later king of Poland. This appears to have been a co-opting to insure the son's succession at his father's death.

Sigismund I however, lived another 19 years, to the age of 80, thus clearly earning his nickname of "the Elder."



In 1544, his son, perhaps impatient at his father's longevity, took up the actual rule of Lithuania and began minting in Vilnius. This half grašis [slide, photo of type above] is dated 1546, two years before the death of Sigismund I, while Sigismund II was ruling Lithuania only. Note however that the legend of the eagle side identifies the issuer as SIGIS AVG REX P MAG DVX L, that is Sigismund August King of Poland and Grand Duke of Lithuania. At the same time his father was minting coins in Cracow. Another interesting feature of this coin is that the sides of the legend are reversed. It is the eagle side that bears the king's titles and the Vytis side that identifies this as a coin of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.

A few half-grašis of Sigismund August maintained the old configuration of titles on the Vytis side and identification on the eagle. Some of these are undated, as the one shown here [slide], and some are dated to 1545, the earliest date on coins of Sigismund August. It is generally assumed that the undated coins are either from 1545 or the beginning of 1546.

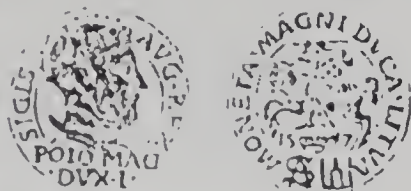
In this period when he actually ruled only Lithuania, Sigismund August issued grašis which

are the first portrait coins of Lithuania.

This example [slide, type illustrated at left] from 1546 replaces the eagle with a portrait of the young Grand Duke and maintains the rider and Columns of Gediminas as the

reverse type. Note that on this coin as well he claims the title of King of Poland.

Even more surprising as an issue during his father's life is this coin of Sigismund August of 1547. Like the one we have just seen it has an obverse portrait with claims to King of Poland as well as Grand Duke



of Lithuania. The reverse again has the statement "Coin of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania" with the Vytis, the Columns of Gediminas and the date 1547, that is during Sigismund I's lifetime. Under the rider however, are added the monogram of Sigismund August and, most significantly, the Polish crown between the numerals. For this coin

is not on the same standard as the other grašis minted in Lithuania in the period. It has $\frac{4}{5}$ as much silver as the Lithuanian grašis, that is the same amount as the Polish grosz being minted at the same time in Cracow. In other words, with this coin, recognizable by the two-line inscription below the portrait, Sigismund Augustus was in direct competition with his father's coinage.

Another innovation of this period in which Sigismund August ruled only Lithuania is the issuance of multiple grašis. This coin of 1547 is actually smaller than the 1 grašis coins seen earlier, but while they had less than one third silver in their



alloy, this is almost pure silver. As the reverse spells out this is worth 3 grašis. It is a silver tripple grašis piece of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. The small three-leaf symbols that punctuate the obverse legend and frame the reverse are the mark of the mint of Vilnius.

In 1548 Sigismund August finally succeeded his father to the Polish throne. There is virtually no change visible in his coinage after this event. The most remarkable aspect of his minting is that he closed the Cracow mint at his father's death and never issued coins minted in Poland itself. Rather, he continued to center his coinage on the Vilnius mint and to put Lithuanian types on his coins destined to circulate in Poland. This coin of 1568, [slide] twenty years after his Polish accession, is on the standard of the Polish grosz, but like the previous coin, keeps the Vytis as the principal reverse type with the Columns of Gediminas beneath and only the small crown representing Poland.

An experiment of Sigismund August was this two grašis piece of 1565. A rather small coin, of good



alloy, it had a totally new reverse type of two shields, one with the Vytis and the other with the Columns, with the Roman numeral II below. This two grašis denomination apparently was not well received, as it was minted only in 1565 and never again issued.

A more successful innovation was the 4 grašis coin of Sigismund August, also introduced in 1565, with the same new types as the 2 grašis coin.

This issue was more popular, as examples of this coin are known from the following four years, but the denomination was used again after that.



A more enduring new denomination of Sigismund August was the 3 grašis piece. We have seen that it was introduced in 1547 as a small coin of high silver content with a portrait obverse and Vytis reverse. The same standard was used for 3 grašis

Continued next page....

pieces of 1556, after almost a decade gap in the minting of the denomination. This time it was apparently no more successful as no further 3 grašis coins were issued for another 6 years. In 1562, the Vilnius mint issued this large 3 grašis piece (above), of very poor silver alloy, with rather traditional types. The pooriness of the alloy apparently made the coin unpopular, as within the same year, the Vilnius mint began to issue smaller, finer 3 grašis pieces. These coins are clearly distinguished from other issues of the 3 grašis piece, and from other denominations, by the substitution of the ruler's monogram for his portrait on the obverse. This type was continued for the following two years.



In 1565 another change was made in this denomination. The Vytis was moved from the reverse to the obverse, along with the

Roman numeral III mark of denomination, while the reverse was devoted to an [anti-Polish] inscription which reads, "QUI HABITAT IN COELIS IRREDEBIT EOS," which means, "He who dwells in Heaven shall mock them." Such a satirical motto is unusual for a coin [initiated by authorities at the Vilnius mint who rejected the idea of lowering the superior Lithuanian coin standard down to the level of Poland's inferior one], and apparently this piece was issued in very small quantities, as it is quite rare today.

In 1547 and again in 1562, Sigismund August issued

6 grašis coins, with a portrait on the obverse and the Vytis on the other. Such coins are extremely rare, though forgeries are not uncommon.

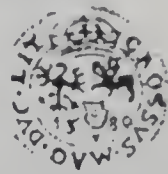


In 1566, Sigismund August made another innovation in the minting of Lithuania, he opened a second mint, in Tikocine, near the Polish border. Coins of this mint are indicated by a horseshoe placed under the image of the Vytis, as on this half-grašis [slide]. They are known only for half-grašis and grašis Lithuanian coins, and coins on the Polish 1 grosz standard, and for the year 1566 only.

Sigismund August reigned until 1572 but issued few silver coins after the opening of this new mint in 1566. In 1569 came an event of as great significance for Lithuanian coinage as for the history of the nation itself, the Union of Lublin. This act, which joined the Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lith-

uania into a single state provided for a single standard of coinage throughout the joined territories. This had no apparent effect on the few coins struck in Sigismund's reign after this, but its ramifications can be noted on the Lithuanian coinages of later monarchs.

After an interregnum of four years, during which few coins were issued, the throne of the united kingdom went to Stephan Batory, a Transylvanian nobleman with no previous connection to either Poland or Lithuania. Batory reopened the Cracow mint, which had been closed throughout the reign of Sigismund August, and henceforth the Polish mint rose in prominence over that of Vilnius. Batory minted few grašis' in Lithuania, apparently only in the years 1580 and 1581. The obverse of this



large, base grašis of 1581 is similar to that of Sigismund August, but the reverse has a marked difference. As

you may recall, on his 2 grašis and 4 grašis piece, Sigismund used a reverse of two shields paired under a crown, but in one shield was the Vytis and in the other the Columns of Gediminas. On his successor's coins, after the Union of Lublin, the paired shields are the eagle, to represent Poland, and the Vytis, to represent Lithuania. The Lithuanian coinage was now a coinage of both nations.

The same remarks can be made on the grašis pieces of Batory minted from 1580 to 1586, with one addition. On the reverse, between the eagle and the Vytis, is a shield bearing the arms of Stephan Batory, implying that the personal element in the government was as important as the two nations which had elected him.

After the death of Batory in 1586 his nephew Sigismund Vasa of Sweden was elected to rule the joined nation. Sigismund was to become king of Sweden in 1592 and was deposed there 12 years later, but he ruled Poland and Lithuania for almost 50 years as Sigismund III. He produced enormous quantities of grosz in Poland, but his Lithuanian coinage shows a marked decline in quantity. His 3 grašis piece followed closely that of Batory.

Sigismund Vasa's earliest 1 grašis pieces were like those of his predecessor, but in 1608 he switched from a bust obverse to the combination of an eagle on one side and a Vytis on the other, an arrangement that had been abandoned 50 years earlier.

Sigismund III stopped minting grašis' in Lithuania in 1615 and resumed again only for three years a decade later. In this grašis of 1626 he has returned to strictly Lithuanian types, that is the obverse is a portrait and the reverse shows Vytis on horseback.



The final coin I'll show today is an error piece. You'll note that it is identical to the previous coin, except that the date is given as 1262 instead of 1626. Obviously the die engraver got his punches mixed up for this die.

Concluded on page 8...

6. The MEMOIRS of PETRAS RIMŠA

Continued from the Oct-Nov. issue...

S. Nėris, P. Cvirka...And this is a very joyful phenomenon, strengthening cultural ties among nations, and promoting their friendship. Lithuanian literature for the first time resolutely crossed its national boundaries. This inspired me to study more closely our great writers. For instance, Kristijonas Donelaitis (1714-1780)--a truly rare and outstanding personality, not only in the history of Lithuanian literature. This poet of western Lithuania is great and unusual in his authenticity, his endless love of the people, and his democracy. There is no surviving portrait of him, and not too much detail of his life [Note: Donelaitis died in 1780 in Tolminkiemis, 15 km. south of the Lithuanian border in E. Prussia. After WWII, the Russians destroyed Donelaitis' church, and found his remains buried underneath. Rimša's rendition of Donelaitis is based upon studying the skull structure]. The basic picture of Donelaitis as an author, is his poem "The Year." From it,



KRISTIJONAS DONELAITIS, medalis

Medal by P. Rimša

Above: Rimša's medal, Type III, without portrait of Luther or Mažvydas.

western Lithuania. Along the obverse edge is the inscription, "Kristijonas Donelaitis, 1714-1780," and in the lower cartouche, the anniversary year (1955).

My search for Donelaitis' portrait did not satisfy me completely. So in that same year I devised two variations. In the first, the torso was larger, the paper's edge could be seen upon which writing appeared. The left hand's bearing was somewhat changed. Different clothing was added. Though really I was most concerned with the study of his face, in this version it did not constitute the dominating factor. The surroundings, and his clothing with its emphatic clarity decreased his role somewhat. [In other words, Rimša is making some changes: In the photo (Type III), notice there is no photo of Luther or Mažvydas or crucifix, but rather, a cuckoo clock! (left side)].

The expression of the countenance in the first two variations differs considerably. Since the second composition aroused some doubts, I returned to my first. In this way, the third torso again resembled the first. The attention is chiefly directed to the countenance: this one probably is more spiritualized. But truly, I would not be able to say, which of the three varieties was the best. I value them all equally.

The background of the third variety is somewhat different. It does not contain Luther's or Mažvydas' portraits [Here Rimša admits this in print]. Their place is taken up by an old-fashioned clock and scales. In addition, on the second and third variety, the formation of the books is adapted to the then current era: their backs are beautiful, Baroque in style.

In the center of the reverse, is Donelaitis' poem, "The Seasons," or more precisely, a page with the first 4-lined stanzas of the four canticles is copied, and also an excerpt from the stories. In the background, I clarified the peasants' life with nature scenes of all four seasons of the year.

Spring turned out with budding branches of trees in bloom, birds wooing and swallows diving about; and ploughmen working the fields. Summer was painted as a rye-cutting time. Reapers exerting themselves with their scythes. Shooks are already set up, and even an overseer flying over on a horse intent on some problem. Autumn: the time to gather in the harvest. The field is full of men and women, working hard. My Donelaitis-like winter shows a snow-covered farmstead, logs hauled on a sled by horses, crows quailing on a branch.

CONTINUED NEXT ISSUE.....

THE 1928 VOLUNTEERS MEDAL

7.

By Vincent Alones and Henry L. Gaidis

The Lithuanian Army Founding Volunteers Medal (Lietuvos Kariuomenės Kureju-Savanorių Medalis), was established on February 27, 1928, to commemorate the formation of the Lithuanian Army, leading to the restoration of independence. On June 10, 1918, while still under German military occupation, the Lithuanian Minister of Defense, Antanas Merkys, undertook the task of forming an army. Working in secret for five months, open recruitment of volunteers commenced on October 16, 1918, at the abandoned German barracks at Snipiskis in the Vilnius suburbs. The 1st infantry regiment: The Grand Duke Gediminas, was formed on November 1, 1918, with successive units being recruited throughout Lithuania. The Lithuanian Army celebrates its founding on November 23, 1918, which date marks the receipt of the first official order to the army from the Minister of Defense. This order was to establish a general staff to defend the country upon the German withdrawal.

The Lithuanian wars of independence started on February 2, 1919, against the invading Communist Russian Bolsheviks; continued against the mercenary German-White Russian forces of Colonel Bermond-Avalov, and did not terminate until 1920 with a cease fire with Poland, arraigned by the League of Nations.

The independence of Lithuania was declared in the capital city of Vilnius on February 16, 1918. Only on June 16, 1919, did Lithuania become a sovereign state, when the German General Commissioner E. Zimmerle and his staff departed from Lithuania.

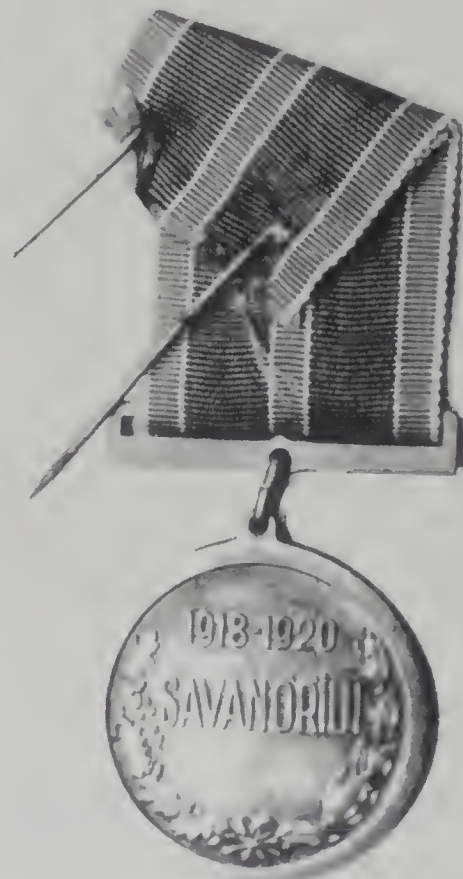
On May 9, 1920, talks began in Moscow and a treaty was signed on July 12, 1920, whereby the Russians recognized Lithuanian independence. On July 27, 1922, the United States President Warren G. Harding announced the recognition of Lithuania.

To honor Lithuania's brave defenders, the government created the Volunteers Medal. The medal was bestowed to those: 1) who during the period of 1918-1920 under war conditions were accepted for military service before they were drafted or mobilized, or during that period were free from being drafted or mobilized; 2) Army chaplains who during 1918-1919 joined the army or the partizan squads; 3) Those who during 1918-1919 joined the partizan squads, before they were drafted or mobilized into the army, or who were free from being drafted or mobilized, also those who participated in battles with the enemy. (Note: the Lithuanian partizan units subsequently evolved into the Šaulių Sąjunga, the National Guard association.)

The Volunteers Medal was bestowed on the founders of the Lithuanian Army and entitled them to all the privileges related to obtaining land. They were also exempted from payment into the government pension fund for the time they served in the army up to January 1, 1926. Volunteers who had lost their lives in battle or who had died prior to the time of awarding the medals could have their medal and benefits presented to relatives such as the widow, children, or parents. The awarding was prohibited to individuals who had forfeited their rights through military punishment, desertion, activities against the government, or did not fulfill 6 months service with the partizans or one full year with the regular army.

The Volunteers medal is bronze, 37 mm. diameter, with a loop attached from a ribbon cross bar. The obverse of the medal features a naked hand with a sword striking and breaking the enemy's sword held in a steel covered hand. The striking sword has also broken a steel chain of bondage stretching across the land. In the foreground stands Grand Duke Gediminas' castle with a flying Lithuanian flag. The manufacturing firm's name, Huguenin Sc., appears at the 5 o'clock position on the border. The reverse bears the inscription "1918-1920 SAVANORIŲ" (Volunteers) inside an honor wreath. The breast medal is worn hanging from a green ribbon 37 mm. wide with three yellow trimmed red stripes. The designer of the medal is believed to have been Juozas Zikaras. Approximately 12,000 persons were awarded the Volunteers Medal, including 100 women, and 100 American-Lithuanians. The Volunteers were honored individuals in Lithuania and also formed their own civilian organization.

CONCLUDED NEXT MONTH...



8. WANT ADS

FOR SALE: Book about the King Mindaugas' 4th Infantry Regiment, by Lt. Col. J. Variakojis, who commanded it beginning in 1919. Paperback, 120 pages. Well illustrated with maps and pictures of bemedaled officers, Vytis crosses and orders. Very interesting reading about Lithuania's struggles for independence against the Bolsheviks, German-White Russian Bermond army, and the Poles. The portrayed officers all look beautiful, of warrior caliber. In Lithuanian. Proceeds go to the Lithuanian Soldiers Association. \$3 postpaid. Charles Matuzas, 107-33 117th St., Richmond Hill, N.Y. 11419

WANTED: A collection of Lithuanian-American tokens, lodge tokens, etc., issued before WWII. Audrius V. Plioplys, M.D., 79 Indian Grove, Toronto, Ontario CANADA M6R 2Y5.

WANTED: Punkte notes: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, White Russia. Also wanted to buy Estonia Wolakohustus notes P. 1-38, Estonia P. 50 1,000 marks, P-52 500 marks, P-60 5,000 marks. Latvia P-19 500 Latu. Also unusual paper money or similar. Write first stating condition and price wanted, and if possible, include xerox copy. Prompt reply guaranteed. John P. Witter, Satomaki Salpa 23, 01370 Vantaa 37, Finland.

FOR SALE: Order of Gediminas, 3rd class Commander's decoration with ring type catch for wear on tunic edge with higher neck decoration (w/o ribbon). Very good to excellent. \$350 or trade in Lithuanian militaria. Henry L. Gaidis, 18225 Queen Elizabeth Drive, Olney, Maryland 20832.

FOR SALE: Silver-like dime size religious medal of St. Casimir. Can be put on a chain. Lith. text reads, "St. Casimir pray For Us." Enclose a S.A.S.E. \$1.50 each. Robert Novak, 966 S. Elden, Apt #5, Los Angeles, California 90006

Want/For Sale Ads are FREE to LNA members! Send us your ad for the next issue!

Have you written Karl Stephens for his latest price list of medieval and modern Lithuanian coins?



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LETTERS

I appreciated the article on the 1938 10 litu fate [January 1984 issue], but I wonder about the destruction of these notes in total. Do you know more about the destruction of these notes? Does anyone know what happened to the other stocks of notes kept in the vaults of the Bank of Lithuania? Are there any reliable reports? ---John P. Witter, FINLAND

A. Yes, there are reports. Lithuania was kept on the litas standard until March, 1941. At that time, it was outlawed, and the notes of Lietuvos Bankas were burned and destroyed right in Lithuania itself. The coins however, were taken to Molotov's Iron Casting Works near Moscow and melted there. A few 1938 10 litu notes were circulated, but these were PAVYZDYS specimens which were already in the teller's areas, and not with the original circulation bundle in the main vault. I have seen other denomination circulated PAVYZDYS notes, which were of course circulated during the Russian occupation 1940-41. The 1938 10 litu circulation issue of course was not allowed by the Russians to be released, and no doubt was destroyed with the rest of the notes by summer, 1941.

I collect military and policy badges from all over the world, of which I have well over 10,000 items. I have had for a long time, an interest in items from the Baltic countries. I have never met anyone who claims to have originated from them. Over the past 20 years of collecting, I have come across very little printed information on military items from the Baltic countries. I was wondering if you could help me out with some information.--Barry J. Hammond, Northern Ireland.

A. Yes Barry, we're happy to help you. We are presenting a series on Lith. military medals & decorations. And in our Want Ads there is an Order of Gediminas for sale. We hope you'll join our LNA and be a part!

Baltic Tours has numerous group tours to Lithuania, Latvia, Poland, Finland, etc. this year. Write for a brochure. Baltic Tours, 293 Auburn St. Newton, Mass 02466. This editor went a few years ago, and had a great time. If any LNA members plan on going, let this editor know!

GRAŠIS COINAGE

Continued from page 5...

In succeeding reigns, the minting of coinage for the Polish-Lithuanian kingdom was increasingly concentrated in Poland and most of the coins of Lithuania were either copper shillings or large silver thalers and gold ducats. Like the independent Grand Duchy of Lithuania, the grašis coin became swallowed up by a centralized administration in Cracow with little concern for the wishes and interest of the Lithuanian people.

We thank Dr. Stahl for his address to the LNA. The field of medieval Lithuanian coins is an area wide open to study. For those wishing to study it in more detail, we highly recommend our English translation Ancient Lithuanian Currencies by Jonas K. Karys, which was presented in installments 1980-1983 here in The Knight.

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All coins in this listing are carefully graded and described, are in stock, and are guaranteed genuine. These coins grade VG to EF for several good reasons:

- (1). No coin is "almost" anything; it either is or isn't. Also, no coin is two grades at once.
- (2). Truly uncirculated coins from pre WW II Europe are extremely scarce, as any collector or dealer will discover if he examines his "unc's" under a 16-20 power glass.
- (3). Most coins I buy as BU, Choice BU, or "Gem" BU grade from CH VF to CH EF. A few are actually uncs, occasionally nice, and, about one a year, choice. I have never seen a "Gem" BU coin.

A coin that is somewhat more attractive than is typical in its grade may rate a "nice." A coin that is both attractive and near a higher grade may rate a "choice."

In USA and Canada, add \$2 to all orders for postage and handling; overseas, add an additional \$3.25 for registration.

Thank you and good luck.

Charles A. Robbins

Livivesthonia: C2a, 4 Kopeks, 1757, nice VG, top of date worn, 45.00

Republic of Estonia:

Y4, Mark, 1922, F (digs and scratches) 0.50; VF 2; CH VF 3; EF (rev hlms) 4

Y4a, Mark, 1924, F (trn's) 2; F 3; VF (lt. stain, trn's) 4

Y8, Mark, 1926, VG 1; VF (rev digs & scrs) 4; VF 8

Y5, 3 Marka, F 2; CH VF (hlms, rev scrs) 3

Y5a, 3 Marka, F 3; CH F 5

1926 3 marka WANTED!

Y6, 5 Marka, 1922, F (obv spot) 1; F 2; VF (sm rn's) 3; CH VF (trn) 4

Y6a, 5 Marka, 1924, VF (sm rb) 4; VF 6

1926 5 Marka WANTED!

Y7, 10 Marka, 1925, F 4; CH F 5;; 1926 10 Marka WANTED!

Y1, sent, 1929, VF (trn's) 0.50; VF 1; CH VF 2; EF 3; Red CH EF 4

Y1a, Sent, 1939, R&B CH VF (trn's) 10; R&L EF 18

Y2, 2 Senti, 1934, F 1, VF 2; CH VF (rev hlms) 3; CH VF 4; CH R&B
VF 5; EF 6; CH R&B EF 7

Y3, 5 Senti, 1931, F (trn's) 1; CH F 1.50; VF 2; CH VF 3; EF (sm rn) 4
EF 5; CH EF 6; CH R&B EF 7

Y11, 10 Senti, 1931 Nice VG 0.50; F 1; VF 2; CH VF (rev spot) 3; EF 5;
CH EF (tiny handling spots) 7

Y12, 20 Senti, 1935, Nice VG 0.50; F 1; CH F 2; VF 3; CH VF 4

Y13, 25 Senti, 1928, CH F 5; VF 8; EF 15

Y14, 50 Senti, 1936 F 6; VF 10; CH VF (sm stain) 12; CH LF 25

Y18, Kroon, 1933 EF 40

Y15, Kroon, 1934 VF 7; CH VF 10

Y16, 2 Krooni, 1930, 1 5; VF (rev scrs) 7; VF 9; CH VF (spots) 12;
CH VF 15

Y12, 2 Krooni, 1932, EF 20; CH EF 30

Republic of Latvia:

Y1, Santims, 1924, EF 3; 1928, w/name EF 3; CH EF (rev scrs) 4; CH EF 7;
1932 CH VF 2

Y10, Santims, 1938, VF 3; 1939 CH VF 6; EF 8

Y2, 2 Santimi, 1922 w/name VF (dipped) 1; EF 3; w/o name VF 12;
1932 EF (rev scrs) 2

Y11a, 2 Santimi, 1939, EF 10

Y3, 5 Santimi, 1922 w/name VF 1; CH VF (rev scrs) 2; CH VF 3; EF
(obv scrs) 3

Y4, 10 Santimi, 1922, w/name VF 1; CH VF 3; EF 6

Y5, 20 Santimu, 1922 VF 1, CH VF 3; EF 7

Y6, 50 Santimu, 1922 VF 3; CH VF 7; EF 13; CH EF 16

Y7, Lats, 1924 VF (obv spot) 2; VF 3

Y8, 2 Latī, 1925 CH VF 8; 1926 VF 9; EF 15

Y9, 5 Latī, 1929, VF 13; CH VF 15; nice EF 25

1931 CH F 11; CH VF (sm obv nks) 13; CH VF 15; EF 19; CH EF 25
1932 VF (obv nks) 15; EF (tiny obv nks) 25

Republic of Lithuania:

Y1, Centas, 1925 VF (trn's) 6; CH EF 20

Y9, Centas, 1936, VF 6; EF 12

Y10, 2 Centai, 1936, VF (once dipped) 4; EF 12

Y2, 5 Centai, 1925, VF 5; CH VF (uneven toning) 7; CH VF 9

Y11, 5 Centai, 1936 CH F 4; CH VF 10

Y3, 10 Centu, 1925 VF 10

Y4, 20 Centu, 1925, CH F 5; VF 10; CH VF 15

Y5, 50 Centu, 1925 CH F 10

Y6, Litas, 1925, F 6; VF 9; clnd EF (hlms) 12

Y7, 2 Litu, 1925 F 8; CH F 12; VF 18

Y8, 5 Litai, 1925 CH VF 28; EF (rb) 30

Y12, 5 Litai, 1936, VF (nks) 7; CH VF (nks) 9; EF (obv scrs) 13;
EF (hlms) 16

Y13, 10 Litu, 1936, VF 29; CH VF (rev dig in helmet, sm rb) 15
CH VF 40; CH EF 55

Y14, 10 Litu, 1938 EF (rev scrs & porous spot) 40

*I buy Baltic States Coins and Pre 1944 Philippine Coins,
Spanish or American.*